



Explore Ecuador

June 9, 2011 - June 18, 2011

Youjin (Jenny) Jang
World Geography G

Date	Time	Location	Description	Price (\$)
			Inoculation	0
			Visa	0
			Travel Insurance	5
			Begin Trip	
6/9/11	7:00 AM	ICN Airport		
	10:00 AM	Asiana Airlines	Fly to JFK	2544
	11:00 AM	JFK	Wait and Read	
	1:10 PM	American Airlines	Fly to Miami	
	4:30 PM	Miami International Airport	Wait and Read	
	6:50 PM	American Airlines	Fly to Quito	
	9:50 PM	Aeropuerto Mariscal Sucre	Arrival	
	10:00 PM	Aeropuerto Mariscal Sucre	Pick-up to Travellers' Inn	0
	10:15 PM	Travellers' Inn	Wash, Change, Sleep	12
6/10/11	8:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Wake Up, Wash, Change	
	9:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Breakfast	0
	9:30 AM	Roads of Quito	Walk to Old Town	0
	10:10 AM	Old Town (Centro Historico)	Stroll & Take Pictures	0
	11:00 AM	Plaza Grande (Plaza de la Independencia)	Walk and Take Pictures	
	11:30 AM	Palacio del Gobierno	Guided Tour in English	0
	1:00 PM	Plaza Grande	End Tour, Walk to Lunch	
	1:10 PM	<i>Hasta La Vuelta, Senor</i>	Secos de Chivo, Traditional Andean Food	7
	2:00 PM	Streets of Old Town	Finish Lunch and Move	
	2:10 PM	The Cathedral at Old Town	Enjoy, Find Last Supper	0
	3:30 PM	Plaza and Monastery of San Francisco		0
	4:30 PM	Museo de Arte Colonial + Museo de la Ciudad		
	6:30 PM	Calle de La Ronda	Arrival (by walking)	

	6:40 PM	<i>Mama Clorinda</i>	Ilapingachos (cornmeal cakes) and steak	6
	7:30 PM	La Ronda	Stroll, Take Pictures, Explore	0
	9:30 PM	La Ronda	End Tour	
	9:40 PM	Taxi	Back to Hotel	2
	10:00 PM	Travellers' Inn	Record, Wash, Change, Sleep	12
6/11/11	8:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Wake Up, Wash, Change	
	9:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Breakfast	0
	9:40 AM	On Ecovia	To Station Casa de la Cultura	0.25
	10:00 AM	El Ejido Park at Casa de la Cultura	Work of Local Artists	0
	12:00 PM	<i>Le Arcate</i>	One of 50 different types of pizza	4
	1:00 PM	Museo del Banco Central	Ecuador's most renowned museum	2
	5:00 PM	Taxi	To Parque de La Carolina (Park)	1.5
	5:30 PM	Parque de La Carolina	Jardin Botanico, two glassed-in orchidariums	
	8:00 PM	Ecovia	Back to Travellers' Inn	0.25
	8:30 PM	Transport Car (Free with reservation)	To Octava de Corpus (Dinner)	0
	8:45 PM	<i>Octava de Corpus Restaurant</i>	Classic Grilled Meat	12
	9:45 PM	Taxi	Back to Travellers' Inn	2
	10:00 PM	Travellers' Inn	Record, Wash, Change, Sleep	12
6/12/11	8:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Wake Up, Wash, Change	
	9:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Breakfast	0
	10:00 AM	Taxi	To Museo Mindalae	2
	10:30 AM	Museo Mindalae (Museo Etnografico de Artesania de Ecuador)	Explore	3
	12:30 PM	<i>El Buen Sandwich</i>	Sanduches de Pernil (ham sandwich)	2
	1:30 PM	Taxi	To Itchimbia Cultural Complex and Park	
	2:00 PM	Itchimbia Cultural Complex and Park	Enjoy	
	5:00	<i>Pim's</i>	The People (Regular Hamburger)	7.32
	6:00	<i>Café Mosaico</i>	Watch Sunset by balcony + Cheese Cake	3

	7:30 PM	Taxi	To Travellers' Inn	2
	8:00 PM	Travellers' Inn	Pack for Tomorrow's Departure	
	10:00 PM	Travellers' Inn	Record, Wash, Change, Sleep	12
6/13/11	8:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Wake Up, Wash, Change	
	9:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Breakfast (Eat Extra for Long Morning)	0
	9:30 AM	Blue Line Public Bus	To La Mitad del Mundo	0.8
	11:30 AM	La Mitad del Mundo (Equatorial Monument)	Official Monument, Pictures, etc.	2
	12:30 PM	Bus from Middle of the World (Mitad del Mundo)	To Intinan Solar Museum (actual equator)	0.4
	1:00 PM	Intinan Solar Museum	Arrival and Entrance	3
	2:30 PM	Bus to Middle of the World		0.4
	3:00 PM	<i>El Maple</i>	Lunch: Four-course set lunch	2.8
	4:00 PM	Blue Line Public Bus	To Travellers' Inn	2
	6:00 PM	Travellers' Inn	Pick Up Luggage, Check Out	
	6:30 PM	Ride	To Quito Bus Terminal	0.5
	7:00 PM	Quito Bus Terminal		
	7:30 PM	Bus	To Otatvalo	2
	10:30 PM	Otavallo Main Bus Terminal (Atahualpa)	Arrival	2
	10:40 PM	Taxi	To Hotel Riviera-Sucre	1
	11:00 PM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Check In, Wash, Change, Sleep	18
6/14/11	9:00 AM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Wake Up, Wash, Change	
	10:30 AM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Breakfast (Brunch)	0
	11:30 AM	Streets of Otavallo	Walk to Market	
	12:30 PM	Otavallo Market	Arrival	
	5:00 PM	Otavallo Market	Explore, Buy, Take Pictures	20
	6:00 PM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Walk Back to Hotel	
	6:30 PM	<i>Café Sol y Luna</i>	Home-style Pasta	6
	7:30 PM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Record, Rest, Wash, Change, Sleep	18
6/15/11	7:00 AM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Wake Up, Wash, Change, Breakfast	0

	8:00 AM	Zulaytar	Arrival	5
	8:30 AM	Indigenous Villages and Towns, Tour	Around Zulaytar	22
	1:00 PM	Zulaytar	End Tour	
	1:20 PM	<i>Chifa Ming Zhu</i>	Steaming Noodle Dish	3
	2:00 PM	Three Lakes	Laguna de Mojanda	40
	7:00 PM		End Tour	
	8:30 PM	Taxi, back at Zulaytar		5
	9:00 PM	<i>Mi Otavalito</i>	Trout	4
	10:00 PM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Record, Wash, Change, Sleep	18
6/16/11	8:00 AM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Wake Up, Wash, Change, Pack Up	
	9:00 AM	Hotel Riviera-Sucre	Breakfast and Check Out	
	9:30 AM	Taxi	To Otavalo Main Bus Terminal (Atahulapa)	1
	10:00 AM	Otavalo Main Bus Terminal	Ride Bus to Quito	0.5
	1:00 PM	Quito Bus Terminal	Arrival	
	1:30 PM	Taxi	To Travellers' Inn	2
	2:00 PM	Travellers' Inn	Check-In, Move in and start off to ChaCha	2
	2:30 PM	<i>ChaCha</i>	Eat at ChaCha (pizza)	5
	3:30 PM	Taxi	To Teleferico	3
	4:00 PM	Teleferico	Begin Ride	
	5:00 PM	Wrap Up Ride and Begin Tour		
		Station Exit	Gardens, Amusement, Rest, Crafts, etc.	100
	7:30 PM	Station Exit	Final Presents & Goods	
	8:00 PM	<i>El Espanol</i>	Sandwich of Choice from Four Types	10
	9:00 PM	Taxi	To Travellers' Inn	3
	9:30 PM	Travellers' Inn	Pack Up, Wash, Record, Sleep	12
6/17/11	5:00 AM	Travellers' Inn	Wake Up, Check Out	
	5:30 AM	Taxi	From Travellers' Inn to Airport, Check In	1.5
	6:30 AM	Continental Airlines	To International Airport of Houston	

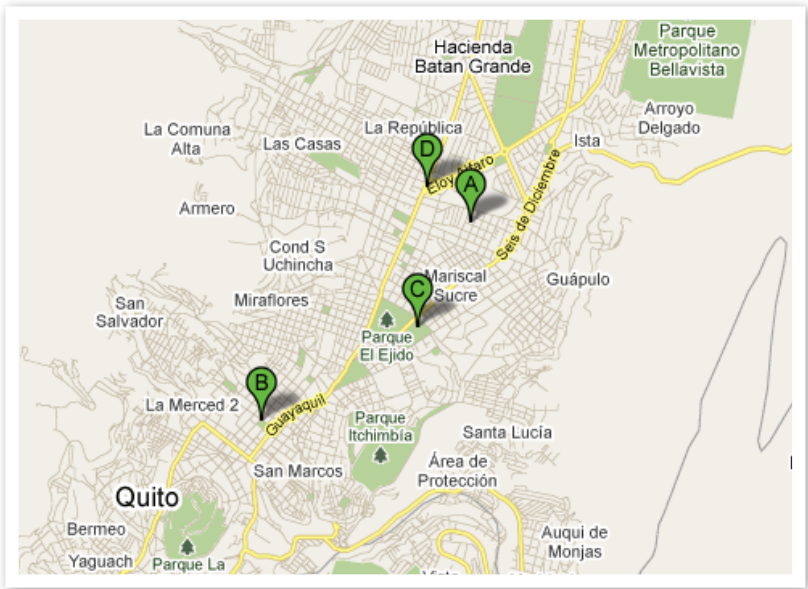
	11:55 AM	International Airport of Houston	Arrival	
		Lunch	Fast Food at Airport	5
	5:00 PM	Houston Intercontinental	To Los Angeles (LAX)	
	6:20 PM	Los Angeles	Arrival	
		Dinner	Food at Airport	8
		Layover Time (6 Hours)		
6/18/11	12:20 AM	Asiana Airlines	To ICN Airport	
	5:20 AM	ICN Airport	Arrival	
Final Cost			End Trip	2982.22



Travel in Ecuador
Quito & Otavalo

Travel in Quito

- A: Day 1 (6/10)
- B: Day 2 (6/11)
- C: Day 3 (6/12)
- D: Day 4 (6/13)





Why Ecuador?

Located on the west coast of South America, bordering Colombia and Peru, Ecuador is a nation rich with geographic, cultural, biological, and ethnic diversity. Despite its relatively small size, Ecuador is home to a wide variety of lands: the regions range from *La Costa* (coastal lowlands), *La Sierra* (Andean highlands), and *El Oriente* (eastern lowlands), to the *Archipiélago de Colon* (Galapagos Islands). Not only do these four regions offer highly different lifestyles and opportunities distinct from each other, each also offers unique sights, sounds, and thrills that encompass a sense of academic and historical significance. Ecuador is one of seventeen countries in the world classified as “**megadiverse**” by UNESCO, with an incredible variety of birds, mammals, and orchids. The nation is also home to many different groups of people, including seventeen distinct indigenous groups, and twenty-seven different ethnic groups. What captures me most about Ecuador, however, is not simply the existence of such teeming colors and variety, but the lasting sense of a **deeply-rooted history that bonds the different cultures together**. This is specifically why I have chosen to focus my trip on the **capital city of Quito**, and to the **adjacent city of Otavalo**. Quito is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the Western Hemisphere, and the mix of Spanish architecture, music, customs, and religion with the indigenous and Inca past makes the city an interesting place to visit. Otavalo also offers a unique cultural experience through its daily markets, where indigenous peoples from around the town come together to bargain and sell goods, and its regular tours into the indigenous villages and homes that outline their special lifestyles.

Visa

Residents and/or citizens of English-speaking and European countries do not need a visa to enter and stay in Ecuador for the first 90 days, and extensions are easily obtainable if necessary. I hold a U.S. passport, so this should not be an issue.

Inoculation

The only recommended inoculation before arrival at Ecuador is against hepatitis. I have already been inoculated against the disease a few months ago, and therefore there is no need to re-do the procedure.

Travel Insurance

For a stay of 9 days, the travel insurance fee is 5 dollars through the AIG Insurance Agency.

Dangers/Challenges

Political Demonstrations

Political demonstrations occur intermittently throughout Ecuador. During demonstrations, protesters often block city streets and rural highways, and public transportation is often disrupted. Protesters sometimes burn tires, throw rocks, damage cars, or use other personal property, and occasionally also use small explosive devices. Although these sights are not as common as they are in some other Latin American nations, it is still safe to avoid areas where demonstrations are in progress. Even peaceful demonstrations can turn violent.

Organized Crime

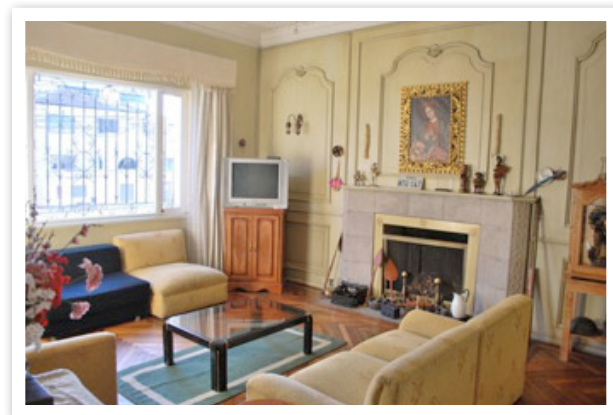
Because Ecuador is still a developing nation, problems such as drug and arms trafficking are still rampant throughout. Crime against American citizens in particular is high, from petty theft to violent crimes, including armed robbery, home invasion, and sexual assault. Some have also been subject to murder and attempted murder. However, these serious crimes are not common; as long as I maintain common sense and do not go around traveling on foot late at night (one of the reasons why my tour ends so early), I will be very unlikely to be involved in such a regretful situation. Purse snatching, pick-pocketing, and hotel room theft are areas that I do not have much control over, especially to highly experienced thieves. However, the best way to prevent any kind of major theft is first, to not carry around valuables, and second, to hold my purse close to me, in a way they cannot snatch it away from me with ease. It is also best not to wear excessive jewelry or anything else that may indicate a high wealth status. Dressing modestly is a big part of prevention of crime. Cellular phones are also a popular target (iPhones and Blackberries in particular), and therefore holding these out in public is not a very good idea.

Taxi Assaults

Recently, a new and particularly dangerous type of crime called “secuestro express” is becoming increasingly popular. Shortly after a rider enters a taxi, the vehicle is intercepted by armed accomplices of the taxi driver, who is normally part of the crime. The accomplices then threaten the passengers with weapons, rob them of their personal belongings, and then drive to various ATMs to withdraw money using the victims’ debit cards. At times, the victims are beaten, tortured, or even sexually assaulted. Fortunately, crime rate involving taxis is not very high in Quito as compared to other cities such as Guayaquil, and it is therefore much less dangerous to ride cabs in the city. In fact, many recommend riding the taxi at night and at times when other methods can be dangerous, as they are the more reliable means of transportation than others.

According to both the embassy and the residents/expats in the area, although Quito is known to be a relatively dangerous city, the danger is very easily avoided by knowing where -- and where not -- to go, and using sound judgment in every aspect of travel.

Thursday, June 9th - Airplanes

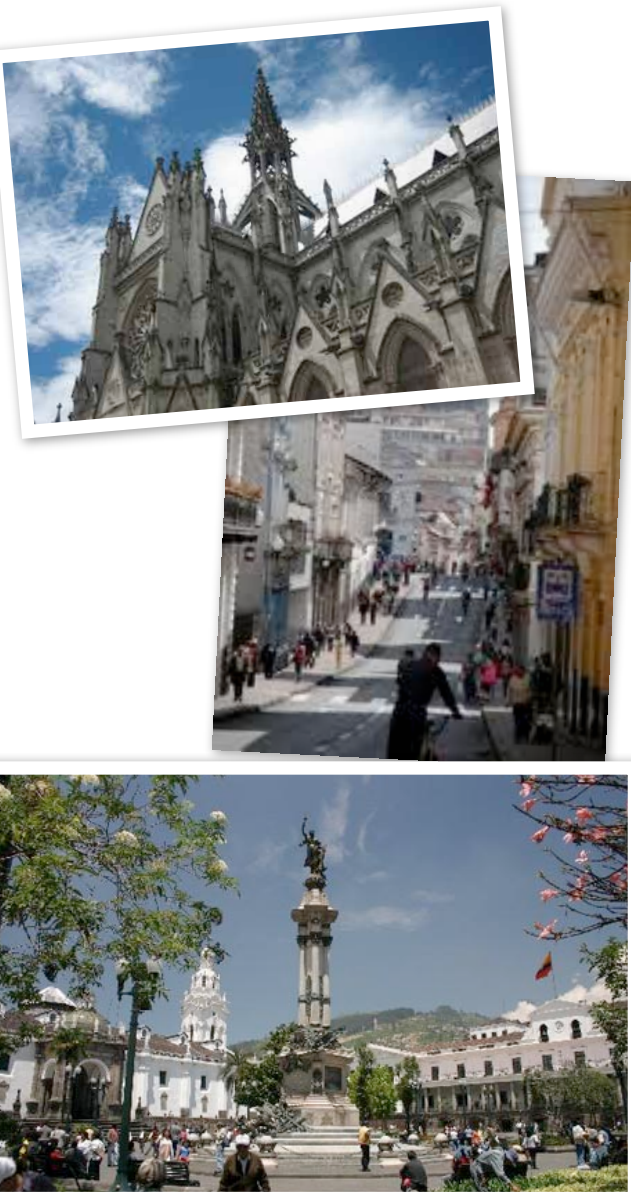


Major Place of Stay: Travellers' Inn

The Travellers' Inn, located in Quito, Ecuador, is situated in a strategic area for tourists. Not only is it just ten minutes away from the airport, but it is also only a few minutes away from the historical site of Old Town, one of the most popular tourist sites in Quito. A single room is \$12 per night, and breakfast is included in this cost. The rooms are equipped with air conditioning, free Wi-Fi service, DVD Player, hair dryer, television, bed, and a desk. Because I am staying at the hotel for four consecutive nights, a free pickup ride from the airport is provided. The owners of the Inn are said to be generally very friendly and willing to give travel tips and/or useful advice.

Old Town

Old Town, or Centro Histórico, is the number one site visited by tourists in Quito. This is the area for which UNESCO named Quito a cultural heritage site, and therefore attracts the attention of many. Some describe Old Town as a landmark that distinguishes Quito from all other cities in the world. With its narrow streets, restored Spanish colonial architecture, and a lively plaza located at the center of the town, Old Town is considered a great place to wander and explore. Within and around the streets are various places worth entering, such as the Plaza and Monastery of San Francisco, the Plaza de la Independencia (Plaza Grande), La Compañía de Jesús (Compania de Jesus Church), and the Museo de Arte Colonial. Built centuries ago by indigenous artisans and laborers, Quito's churches, convents, chapels, and monasteries are steeped deeply in history. The area itself is bustling with the tourists and worshippers going back and forth from the regular church services, along with street vendors, taxis, buses, and whistle-blowing policemen trying to clear traffic in largely congested one-way streets. Many visitors say that the more enthusiastic the visitor is with finding out the hidden jewels of the area, the more dynamic the experience will be; therefore, I am planning on taking the entire day, walking around the streets, and peeking into churches and important buildings, but also trying to explore the hidden corners of the Old Town.



Plaza Grande (Plaza de la Independencia) / Picture Directly Above

The beautiful Plaza de la Independencia, located at the heart of Old Town, is walled by four pillars of society: the Cathedral, Presidential Palace, The Archbishop's Palace, and Municipal Palace. At the center of the square is the Monument to the Heroes of Independence, which is a symbol of the triumph of the Republic over the Spanish. Therefore, the area holds not only a historical significance, but also a political one; current politicians still work in this area of the town to conduct national affairs. The place often consists of a patchwork of daily scenes, as it is often a location by which people stop and rest. Common sights include women knitting, highland Indians carrying babies on their backs, sweet-sellers yelling for sales, men browsing through the newspaper headlines, and shoe-shine boys looking for new clients. Thus, it is a place at which I can find a bench and gently take in the atmosphere of the city's first square, which has remained at the very heart of its community to the present day with a sense of bond and identity.



La Merced Convent

The church of La Merced dates from the sixteenth century. The original structure was modified in the eighteenth century, because the earthquakes had caused serious damages to the temple. A beautiful English clock of 1817 decorates the tower of the church, and the interior is filled with oil paintings by the artist Victor Mideros, who emphasizes religious subjects.

La Compañía de Jesús (The Company of Jesus Church)

Located in the middle of Old Town, The Company of Jesus Church is a glittering colonial masterpiece built by the Jesuits in the 17th century. Here, I say “glittering” not as a literary device, but as a literal adjective; the restored interior of the beautiful church is adorned by gold coverings, moorish details, and sculptures by Bernardo de Legardo. The entrance fee is inexpensive, at \$2 per visitor, and especially cheap compared to the marvels the place holds with its rich history and astounding beauty. I am very excited to visit, as many reviewers online have testified to the magnificence of it. Some have also commented that the building is blatant evidence of the indulgence and corruption of the church during times when so many were in need. Either way, I am looking forward to seeing and judging the construction for myself.



Palacio de Gobierno

Palacio de Gobierno, or the Government Palace, is the austere, white building to the northwest side of Plaza Grande. With the national flag flying atop, the palace holds on its third floor the President’s private quarters, where he lives with his family. Visitors like myself can enter through free guided tours offered in English or Spanish, which offer a glimpse of the many-hued mosaic depicting Francisco de Orellana’s descent of the Amazon. I may also get the chance to peer in some staterooms, though this is at times restricted due to presidential meetings and other security issues.

The Cathedral

Located on the southern side of La Plaza Grande, the Cathedral of Quito serves as the seat of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Quito, and is considered one of the oldest cathedrals in South America. Artwork by artists from the Quito School of Art of the sixteenth century decorate the interior of the building. Although the exterior of the Cathedral follows orthodox Spanish planning, the main altar is designed in Baroque style. White walls, green ceramic dome, the arch of Carondelet, and the foliated staircase that comes down to the Plaza Grande are characteristic of the Cathedral. The church also consists of many historical points,



such as the plaques on the outside walls that commemorate the launching point of Francisco de Orellana's expedition to the Amazon, the catacombs of the Cathedral that house the dead bodies of many important figures in Ecuador's history (such as independence leader Antonio Jose de Sucre), and the small altar of Nuestra Senora de los Dolores (Our Lady of Sorrows) that has a plaque showing where Gabriel Garcia Moreno was shot in 1875.

Plaza and Monastery of San Francisco

Walking down from the Old Town's narrow colonial streets into the open Plaza San Francisco opens gate to the beautiful sight of the cobblestone plaza, backed by the long whitewashed walls and twin bell towers of Ecuador's oldest church, the Monastery of San Francisco. Behind the plaza is also the background of Volcano Pichincha, adding on to the austerity of the buildings. Construction of the Monastery of San Francisco began a few weeks after the founding of Quito in 1534, and ended around seven decades later. It is now the largest colonial structure in the city, and a statue of Joedco Ricke (founder of Franciscan missionary) is erected in the far right of the raised terrace in front of the church.



Museo de Arte Colonial (Museum of Colonial Art)

Housed in a restored 17th-century colonial mansion, the Museum of Colonial Art consists of a permanent exhibit of Spanish colonial furniture, along with vast collection of sculptures and paintings from the School of Quito.



Museum de la Ciudad

The Museo de la Ciudad is located near the Museo de Arte Colonial, and is a nice museum with two floors encircling two quiet courtyards. The Museo de la Ciudad focuses more on the social history of Ecuador compared to the other museums in Quito; re-enacted scenes from the daily lives of Ecuador's citizens through the years are depicted within the museum, starting from the scene of a 16th-century home, to a battle scene against the Spanish, and finally to the illustrations of the building of the Iglesia de San Francisco church.

Calle de la Ronda ("Small Alleyway")

This street in the Old Town was restored by Municipality and FONSAL in 2007. It was transformed with the help and cooperation of the local residents, and it is famous for its romantic cobbled street full of shops, patios, art galleries, and modest cafe restaurants, all run by residents. Cultural events also take place in the weekends, enlivening the experience for the visitors. Walking down La Ronda can be a walk back into time, because it deeply resembles a colonial street with its narrow and pedestrian-only road, along with the



narrow wooden doors opening into homes built around the interior stone patios. This area is historically significant in that it primarily served as a pathway for Pre-Inca and Pre-Hispanic residents to reach the river to wash clothes or soak *chochos*. Then, in the twentieth century, the place was home to many artisans, housing painters, musicians, poets, and artists. This is a good place to check out galleries, get food, and shop. I am visiting at night because previous visitors have commented on its particular beauty at night.

Saturday, June 11th– Casa de la Carta

Ecovia Bus

Ecovia, denoted by red buses and stations marked with an **e**, runs from Rio Coca Station up at the very north to La Marin Station inside the Quito historic downtown. Some major stops include (and these are also the ones I am using) Casa de la Cultura, Estadio Olimpico, and Quicentro mall.



El Ejido Park

As one of the most traditional parks in the city, El Ejido is located on Avenue Patria, just west of Casa de la Cultura. On weekends,



the place offers a nice opportunity for visitors to look through the works of local artists, who display and sell their goods on the park's sidewalks. Street entertainers, such as comedians and traveling theater groups, often perform in the park, attracting large and small crowds of young and old alike. Sometimes, intense matches of *ecuarvolei*, a national sport similar to volleyball but played with a soccer ball, also takes place in the park, capturing the passers-by's attention. The entrance fee is free, which makes it all even better.

Museo Nacional del Banco Central (Central Bank Museum)

Located across from the Casa de la Cultura and adjacent to Parque El Ejido, this museum contains a substantial collection of pre-Columbian, colonial art in one wing, and contemporary art in the other. However, more than the artwork, what is praised about this



museum is the opportunities it provides to examine the historical aspect of Ecuador in great detail. The entrance fee is low (\$1.50 per person), and in this cost is included a view



of the archaeological history of Ecuador, consisting of remains and records of its first inhabitants, the gold artifacts, and ancient pieces, sculpture, paintings, utensils, and objects, to the colonial and republican history, up to

the contemporary period. The second story of the museum also contains some background information about the religious history of Ecuador, and this gives great insight into the traditions of the nation. This seems to be a great place to get a grasp of the overall history of Ecuador, and thus an intriguing academic experience as a whole. Many positive comments have been made about the informative nature of this museum, and its accessibility in terms of price and distance.



Parque de La Carolina

Similar to New York's Central Park, La Carolina is in the heart of modern Quito, and boasts several recreational areas, such as soccer fields, tennis courts, jogging tracks, and walking paths, as well as a manmade lagoon where families can rent paddleboats and canoes. On weekends, pony rides are also offered for children. However, my main purpose of visiting this park is not only to relax and have fun, but also to visit the famous Jardin Botanico, a beautiful botanical garden displaying the national flora of the area. Many say that the highlight of the garden are the two glassed-in orchidariums,

and I am very excited to see what those look like. The park also commemorates a moment of historical significance, the mass congregation celebrated by Pope John Paul II in 1985, by a large monument in the shape of a cross called *La Cruz del Papa*.

Sunday, June 12th – Cultural Exploration

Museo Mindalae

(Museo Etnografico de Artesania de Ecuador)

The Mindalae Museum is an extremely original project located in the north of the Mariscal District. This museum provides an ethno-historical view of Ecuador's amazingly rich cultural diversity. It provides information about the country's different peoples, from the coast to the Andes to the Amazon, and also includes a showcase of their handicrafts, displayed in specially designed structures. I am planning on taking a guided tour in English so that I can better understand the different pieces of displays in the museum.



Itchimbia Cultural Complex and Park

The Itchimbia Cultural Complex and Park is located on a hill that lies to the east of the Old Town. The hill provides stunning views of central and northern Quito, as well as the distant peak of Cayambe in the northeast. There are temporary exhibitions that take place within the center, and in the weekends,

workshops are held for visiting children. The Itchimbia Cultural Complex consists of a glass and metal building that offers a beautiful panoramic view of the Pichincha Volcano and other sights. The area is also rich in natural vegetation and contains more than 400 different assortments of flowers, 40 species of birds, and a wetland right in the center of the city.

Monday, June 13th – Equator



La Mitad del Mundo (Equatorial Monument, “Middle of the World”)

The Mitad del Mundo (“Middle of the World” in Spanish) is a museum about the indigenous ethnography of Ecuador. The 30-meter-tall monument, built between 1979 and 1982, was originally constructed to mark the point where the equator passes through the country; a line down the center of the east-facing staircase, and across the plaza, was meant to indicate the 0 degree line of latitude. However, according to the newly developed GPS system, the actual equator is placed about 240 meter north of the marked line.

Therefore, in addition to visiting this official site, I am also taking the time to move a few meters to the north and explore the actual equator (Because, after all, the name of the nation is Equator; what kind of tour would it be to not check out the equator when visiting this nation?)



Intinan Solar Museum

The Intinan Solar Museum is located right next to the Mitad del Mundo monument, and for \$3 you can have a little tour of this little museum. At this location, you can see actual scientific evidence that the indicated line is the equator, such as the Coriolis effect and many other experimentations that you can try out for yourself. Some of these demonstrations include balancing a row of egg on the head of a nail, or trying to walk in a straight line as you are walking on the equator. At times, other cultural experiences such as dance shows by the indigenous are available.



Tuesday, June 14th – Otavalo Market

Otavalo Market

Otavalo's beauty lies in its people, the indigenous Otavalenos. The Otavalo Market, which makes this town famous, is undoubtedly one of the most important and spectacular markets in all of Latin America. The Otavalo Market is attractive to visitors for both its outstanding shopping and its cultural significance. Local people use market day much the same way that their ancestors did during Ecuador's pre-Colombian history. The market is centered around the Plaza de Ponchos each and every day, and this area becomes the nucleus of tourist activity, with its staple of woolen goods, such as tapestries, blankets, ponchos, thick hooded sweaters, scarves, gloves, hats, and alpaca goods, in addition to embroidered blouses, hammocks, carving, jewelry, and many others.



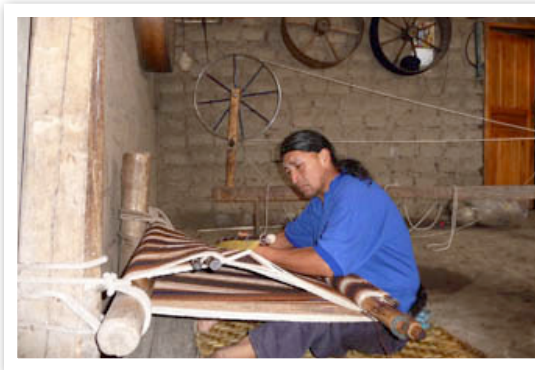
Panama Hat

Considered the prince of straw hats due to its use by the royalty, nobility, writers, hollywood stars, singers, and celebrities, the Panama Hat is one of the finest straw hats in the world. Despite its misleading name ("Panama"), the Panama Hat is in fact exclusively made in Ecuador. The special straw from which these hats are made, the toquilla palm leaf, only grows in the warm lowlands of the Ecuadorian coast, 100 or 400 meters above sea level. The confusion with the name occurred mainly because workers at Panama canal used the hat as a means of protecting themselves from intense sunlight while constructing the Panama canal. I will buy one that is within the price range of 25 to 50 dollars, and keep it as a souvenir.

Wednesday, June 15th - Indigenous Life in Otavalo

Zulaytar

Zulaytar is one of the original tour operators in Otavalo, and has been around for more than 20 years in the area. Much of their tour programs revolve around the indigenous peoples and their lives, and focuses on cultural experience. The most unique tour that Zulaytar offers is the cultural visit to six different indigenous villages in the Otavalo area. The villages of Punyaro, Carabuela, San Roque, La E. de San Roque, Cerotal, and Iluman are visited during a period of four to five hours, and this is the first tour I am taking. After I am done with this, I am going to go on a second tour again organized by Zulaytar, called Lagunas de Mojanda. In this tour, I will be exploring three different lakes that are situated to the south of Otavalo. I will walk up this area and stroll through the various walks they have to enjoy the view.



Thursday, June 16th – Back to Quito, Final Night

Teleferico & Station Exit

The Teleferico is the second-highest cable car in the world, and is located in the city of Quito, on the Avenue Western at a height of the Avenue of The Gasca, so that visitors can be able to enjoy the beauty of not only the city, but also the valleys, the snow-capped mountains, and all the natural ecological environment surrounding it. Upon exit after riding the cable car, I can find an area of vast commerce, with handcrafted squares, bars, restaurants, small squares of amusement and rest, and viewing-points surrounded with beautiful gardens and exuberant vegetation.



Friday, June 17th - Departure



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